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PROGRESS OF THE WORLD

BY WILLIS FLETCHER JOHNSON

AMERICA takes the lead for world peace. That is the inspiring purport of the President's action. Amid the score or more of wars that have occurred since the armistice of 1918, the continued military preparations of the powers, the rumors of impending conflicts of vast magnitude, and all the hesitancy, doubt and fear that beset the world, there comes one clear, brave voice. "Come," says the President in effect to the other four Great Powers, "Come, and let us reason together for the limitation of armaments." This is a summons which cannot be refused, and which can not fail—faith in God and man forbids us to doubt it—to have beneficent results surpassing anything else that we have known in our age. The question of limiting armaments has been discussed before, as one item in the voluminous agenda of miscellaneous conferences. This is the first time in history when the chief nations of the whole world have been called together for the specific and sole purpose of seeking such limitation. It is the voice of the President that calls them; and the voice of the President is the voice of America.

The long-promised new era in Ireland began, formally and actually, with the opening of Parliament at Belfast, the King and Queen being in personal attendance; and June 22, 1921, henceforth ranks in Irish and British annals with January 1, or February 2, 1801, whichever may be regarded as the true date of the beginning of the Union. Unhappily the new order of things was accepted and went into effect in only a minor fraction of the island, the central and southern parts, under Sinn Fein domination, remaining recalcitrant and defiant. Mr. Lloyd George immediately strove to put into effect the conciliatory spirit of the King's Speech, by inviting the heads of the Ulster government and the chiefs of the Sinn Fein "Republic" to meet himself and his colleagues in a friendly tripartite conference. His efforts were earnestly seconded by General Jan

Smuts, acting as a candid friend of all three parties and as an advocate at once of regional autonomy and of imperial solidarity. The gratifying result is a more hopeful prospect of just and amicable settlement than would a month ago have been regarded as possible. To the United States these developments should be of special interest, apart from our humane desire for the welfare of all kindred peoples, as confirmation of this country, both officially and popularly, in its correct attitude toward the "Irish question." No people are more ready than Americans to sympathize with every legitimate aspiration for governmental reform, enlargement of liberty, and establishment of self-government. None should be more scrupulous in refraining from interference of any kind in the domestic affairs of a friendly foreign Power. John Hay's description of our foreign policy as "the Monroe Doctrine and the Golden Rule" is doubly apt. The one pledges us not to meddle in the affairs of European nations which do not concern us. The other admonishes us to do to others in 1921 as we wished others to do to us in 1861.

The college and university commencement season of 1921 has been marked with exceptional interest both in its general aspects and in various specific features. Among the latter conspicuously outstanding was the centenary commemoration of the founding of Amherst College as an institution for the free education of candidates for the Christian ministry. The college quickly got away from that narrow scope, and for a hundred years has been a fine example of what has rather infelicitously been called the "small college" and which may better be called simply the college as distinguished from the true university. It has been foremost in demonstrating the indispensable utility and value of such institutions of general culture as the very backbone of our higher educational system, whether as ends in themselves or as the best possible feeders to the post-graduate, professional and research schools of the great universities.

Another commencement time incident of national interest was the installation of a new President of Yale University, in circumstances marking a new era in the history of that institution, the chief of them being that Dr. Angell was before his election in not

the slightest respect connected or associated with Yale. A few of the very first Presidents of Yale were alumni of other colleges, for the reason that Yale had not yet a sufficient body of alumni to draw from. But since the first five, until Dr. Angell, every Yale President was a "Yale man." The new President was educated at the University of Michigan, and is the son of a President of that great institution who had himself been educated at Brown University. For the first time in a history of more than two centuries, Yale has at its head the product of a Western "freshwater college." That might mean that Yale had conformed itself with the standards of scholarship obtaining elsewhere, even in the generality of colleges and universities throughout the nation; or it might mean that other institutions had come up to Yale's standard. Did Mohammed go to the Mountain, or did the Mountain after all come to Mohammed? Judicious observers will in this case incline to the latter view. There has been no decline in the standards of Yale and the other great Eastern universities, but there has been a coming up to that standard by other institutions in all parts of the land. That is the national significance of Dr. Angell's election to Yale—the uniformity and solidarity of our national intellectual culture.

The order for the withdrawal of our arbitrary military despotism from Santo Domingo is to be regarded with gratitude, though it came too late to save us from much shame and from the just resentment of the people of the island republic. Years ago, when President Roosevelt merely loaned an expert official to advise and assist the Dominican Government in its fiscal affairs, there was a monstrous to-do over such "meddling" and "imperialism." Yet under the Wilson Administration our Government went almost immeasurably further than had so much as been dreamed of, and established what was very much like a military satrapy over a conquered and subject people. It cannot be maintained that there was any justification for such a course, in law or morals, nor does there seem to be any reason for hoping that permanent good has been wrought by it in the island. We shall be fortunate if, through frank withdrawal from a course which we never should have undertaken, we avoid a serious alienation of confidence.

One of the most interesting announcements of recent years in the realm of journalism is that of the purchase of control of the *Saturday Review* (of London) by the Canadian-English banker, Sir Edward Mackay Edgar, and the engagement of Mr. Sydney Brooks—who needs no introduction to the readers of this REVIEW—as its Editor. Since it was founded by Lord Salisbury's brother-in-law, Mr. Beresford-Hope, two-thirds of a century ago, the *Saturday Review* has had an always conspicuous, generally brilliant and often influential place in English journalism. At first Peelite and then ultra-Conservative in politics, its strenuous partisanship incurred for it at times the name of *Saturday Reviler*. But more than for its politics it is remembered and regarded for its attention to sociological and literary matters. It was in its pages that Mrs. Lynn Linton exploited the "Girl of the Period," and that Messrs. Andrew Lang, Frederick Greenwood, George Saintsbury, H. D. Traill and others presented some of their best writing to the public. Nor should we forget, as a striking instance of what we might call the liberality of Toryism, that during some of his most radical and iconoclastic years Mr. George Bernard Shaw was a conspicuous member of its staff. We could not wish Mr. Sydney Brooks a more fascinating task than that of taking over this journal, with its brilliant and unique traditions, and remoulding it in accordance with his own principles of journalism, nor could we wish the redoubtable *Saturday* a worthier fate than to fall into his cultivated and masterful hands.

The appalling flood disaster at Pueblo and other places in Colorado was apparently one of those "acts of God" for which men disclaim responsibility. It does not seem that it was due in any appreciable measure to human faults or follies, but to an outburst of the elements which could not be foreseen, averted or controlled; though we shall not question the possibility that some day engineering skill will devise ways and means of protecting mankind against even such disasters. By contrast, at almost the same time, there was a still more appalling occurrence at Tulsa, Oklahoma, which was not at all an "act of God" or a cataclysm of nature, but was due entirely to human faults and follies and the abhorrent passions which nineteen centuries of

Christianity have not yet eliminated from the race. Years ago a serious South American revolution arose over the question whether five or ten cents was to be paid for a melon. So this hideous race war of devastation and extermination is said to have arisen over the misuse or misunderstanding of a single word. But a spark cannot cause an explosion unless the magazine is there, ready to be exploded. The misinterpretation of the word was one of the commonest and stupidest of the current corruptions of English speech. But it would have been innocuous had not evil passions been there, ready for unchaining with even so small a key. Our civil engineers will do well to curb, if they can, the fury of mountain torrents. Immeasurably more do we need some moral engineering which will not only curb but if possible destroy the far more deadly passions of cruelty, savagery and hatred which lurk in the dark recesses of the human heart. Mention of Pueblo arouses only sentiments of pity, help and hope. Mention of Tulsa will for many a year excite those of loathing, detestation and immeasurable shame.

An encouraging reminder of progress in a little noticed corner of the world was afforded by the consecration in a New York City church, of the Protestant Episcopal faith, of a Suffragan Bishop of Liberia; the significant feature of the incident being that the clergyman was in his youth a member of one of the wild Negro tribes which still roam in the inland jungles of that part of Africa, and owed his civilization, education and preparation for the episcopal office entirely to schools within the Negro republic. It is just a hundred years since Liberia was founded by the American Colonization Society as a refuge for American Negroes who had been emancipated but were denied enfranchisement. In those years the little nation, now composed almost entirely of African-born Negroes, has been generally neglected by this and other countries to a discreditable degree, but in spite of that circumstance has maintained a stability and integrity of government and has attained a degree of civilization and culture, which might be much envied by many a more pretentious and more conspicuous State. It is particularly encouraging to observe that with a few early exceptions the men of "light and leading"

1 Liberia, such as Barclay and Blyden, and the newly-conse-

crated Bishop Gardiner, have been of unmixed Negro blood and have owed their culture chiefly if not entirely to Liberian schools.

There was, and with much reason, profound satisfaction, in the United States as in France itself, at the fine support which M. Briand received in the Chamber of Deputies when a vote of confidence was sought on his policy in the settlement with Germany. Criticism had been noisy and virulent, but when after full and free debate, and after M. Briand's frank and manly exposition of his course and the reasons for it, a vote was taken, more than seventy-one per cent of the Deputies registered their approval. Equally gratifying was the assurance, quickly following, that the relations between France and Great Britain remained unimpaired in cordiality and mutual confidence. It would have been deplorable and ominous for M. Briand to be repudiated by the representatives of the nation which he has served so well in so difficult circumstances. It would have been nothing less than disastrous to have a breach between the two great Allied Powers.

Lord Curzon's destructive criticism of the League of Nations was described by some writers as unexpected. Why, does not appear; unless merely in the time and technical occasion. He is a man whose sane perceptions are not dazzled by idealistic visions. Mr. Lloyd George had only a week before declared that the League was dangerously insufficient, and that unless controlled by a right public opinion it might lead to war. And a little before that various League Powers, great and small, had taken both diplomatic and military action of the most important kind without consulting the League or so much as recognizing its existence; while several others, of authoritative status, had given notice of their resolute purpose to move for radical amendment of the Covenant, even to the cardiectomy or excision of Article Ten. The progress of events is remorselessly demonstrating that, as Lord Curzon says, the Allies at Paris erred in precipitately rushing into discussion of matters which it is now seen would better have been solved by being postponed; and that if instead of taking up the regulation of the world they had endeavored to secure the peace of the world as it then was, "we should

have been much further advanced in the conditions of peace than we now are."

Memorial Day was marked, above many other appropriate and impressive incidents, by the unveiling and dedication of a bust of Washington in St. Paul's Cathedral, London, close by the monumental tombs of Nelson and Wellington. We are not sure that a more gratefully significant act of the kind was ever performed in any country of the world, though it was merely a confirmatory epilogue to the memorable speech of King George at his dinner to President Wilson at Buckingham Palace. Of course it is historically true that Washington was in the first instance a British commander, fighting for the King under the Union Jack, and it was not unfitting to be reminded of that fact. But of course it was not for that reason that he was honored by the side of Nelson and Wellington, but rather because he was the victorious leader of a revolution against British misgovernment and the founder of a new and independent Anglo-Saxon nation. It was not Braddock's aid and successor, but Cornwallis's conqueror, not the Washington of Great Meadows but the Washington of Trenton and Yorktown, whose effigy was placed in St. Paul's. The incident interpreted in action the King's speech of three and a half years before.

The death of General Horace Porter, literally "full of honors and years," removed almost the last important figure of the Civil War, and one of even greater importance in civil and diplomatic life since that struggle. A grateful nation must never forget that it owes to him the stately sepulchre of its most famous soldier and also the home-coming and appropriate entombment of the founder of its navy. Those two labors of love will cause his name to be inseparably and perpetually associated with the fame of Grant and John Paul Jones. Neither will it be forgotten, while international law and justice are cherished, that he conspicuously made the influence and the principles of America felt in the great Congress at The Hague, in the direction of the adjudication of international controversies on a basis of equity and equality.